

Outreach

A Communications Program of the National Institute of Mental Health, National Institutes of Health

Summer 2000

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From the NIMH Director

Welcome

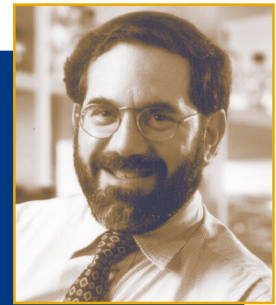
I want to extend a special word of welcome to the Outreach Partners, who are joining NIMH in an important new collaborative venture. This program offers all of us a unique opportunity to work together as agents for change by communicating science-based information on mental health to the public and health professionals, and thus improving the mental health of people in every part of the country.

Recently, NIMH has had some remarkable opportunities to contribute to the public understanding of mental disorders. In June 1999, we participated in the White House Conference on Mental Health and Mental Illness, which was widely covered by the media. A month later, Surgeon General David Satcher, M.D., issued a Call to Action to Prevent Suicide, now the ninth leading cause of death in this country. NIMH worked closely with the Surgeon General on this vitally important initiative. And in December, Dr. Satcher issued the first-ever Surgeon General's report on mental health (*Mental Health: A Report of the Surgeon General*), which has been widely hailed as the landmark document it is. NIMH was privileged to play a critical role in providing scientific data and educational materials for these events, and in publicizing them to the media and a broad array of constituency groups.

The primary messages of these reports and events are powerful and compelling—mental disorders are real and research has brought effective treatments for most mental illnesses. But we must continue to search for new and innovative ways to keep the messages of these reports and events in the forefront of the Nation's awareness. These messages must be more than yesterday's headlines.

We face significant challenges. We know that for various reasons, including stigma and problems of access, many people with mental disorders do not seek help. Furthermore, the advances of science also point to a major problem—the wide gap between what we know, through the progress of research, and real world practice. It is critical that we improve care by getting science-based information to health professionals, consumers, and families. We also need to increase public awareness of the ongoing need to take advantage of emerging opportunities in neuroscience and technology that can lead to cures for—and even prevention of—serious and disabling disorders like depression, schizophrenia, anxiety disorders, and autism.

I look forward to working with you to meet these challenges. ■



**NIMH Director
Steven E. Hyman**

Contact Us

Outreach is a resource for the Constituency Outreach and Education Program, National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). The program is directed by NIMH, the Federal Government's primary agency devoted to research on the mind, brain, and behavior. NIMH awarded a contract to ROW Sciences, a health care consulting firm, to help run the program. Key staff members are listed below:

Elaine Baldwin

Public Liaison Officer
Director, Constituency Outreach and Education Program, NIMH
ebaldwin@nih.gov
301-435-4672

Lynn Cave

Project Officer
Associate Director, Constituency Outreach and Education Program, NIMH
lcave@nih.gov
301-435-4673

Or write to us: NIMH, Constituency Outreach and Education Program,
31 Center Dr., Rm. 4A-52, Bethesda, MD
20892-2475

Patricia Bradley

ROW Sciences
pbradley@hq.row.com
301-294-5574

Michele Bupp

ROW Sciences
mbupp@hq.row.com
301-294-5416

Joanna Tyler

ROW Sciences
jtyler@hq.row.com
301-294-5643

Eileen Zeller

ROW Sciences
ezeller@hq.row.com
301-294-5509

More Outreach Partners To Be Selected This Fall

NIMH is seeking 34 additional Outreach Partners to join the current group for a total of 52 Partners. The Institute released a Request for Applications for the Constituency Outreach and Education Program in June, with a deadline of August 4 for receipt of proposals.

"Our existing Partners from 17 States and the District of Columbia are exceptional, and NIMH looks forward to bringing on board an equally outstanding group of organizations from the remaining States and Puerto Rico," said Elaine Baldwin, director of the program.

An Expert Panel consisting of researchers, clinicians, consumers, and representatives from national advocacy groups will review applications. Awards to new Outreach Partners will be announced in October. ■

Internet Resources

The home page for the NIMH Constituency Outreach and Education Program is <http://www.outreach.nimh.nih.gov>. Bookmark this location and check for updates on program activities.

The Web site, covering all of NIMH's programs, is <http://www.nimh.nih.gov>. Be sure to sign up for the free NIMH E-News LISTSERV, which will notify you when new information is added to the NIMH site. Registration for the electronic mailing list is located at the bottom of the home page screen. ■

Program Head Outlines Goals

The NIMH Constituency Outreach and Education Program has evolved from previous programs conducted by the Institute on depression and anxiety disorders. This program, however, has a much broader scope—it encompasses education on *all* mental disorders, and it is a truly national program with goals that extend beyond general awareness of the symptoms and treatability of particular mental disorders. Through this program, we hope to build awareness of the importance of basic and clinical research in advancing knowledge of the brain and behavior—knowledge critical to the development of new and improved treatments for mental disorders. We hope to stimulate participation in the Institute’s newly launched, large-scale clinical trials. We are conducting outreach to physicians, employers, and other decisionmakers, building awareness of science-based interventions that can significantly improve the health and quality of life of people with mental disorders. And we are calling special attention to the need to eliminate disparities in mental health care related to race, culture, age, and gender.

Drawing on the strengths and talents of many dedicated individuals representing public and private organizations at the national, regional, State, and community levels, this broad program not only can help change the way Americans view mental illness, but also it can help influence the overall climate regarding mental health in this country. This program is being launched at a propitious moment, coming on the heels of the first-ever Surgeon General’s report on mental health, released in December. As Surgeon General David Satcher, the Nation’s doctor, has noted, “now is the time” to take action.

The NIMH Outreach Partners we are establishing in every State, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico already have an impressive track record in

advancing the cause of mental health. They are providing information and assistance to millions of people who suffer from mental disorders and their families; they are educating providers and the media, fighting stigma, and advocating for change in the kinds of services people are meant to receive. NIMH will reinforce their efforts by linking them together and by providing regular scientific updates, materials, and technical training.

The National Partners of this program are the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, the National Depressive and Manic Depressive Association, the National Mental Health Association, and the

National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors. Their affiliates make up the bulk of the Outreach Partners. Representatives of the National Partners are members of an Expert Panel of researchers, clinicians, and consumers that will advise NIMH throughout the life of the program.

The other critical arm of this program is a growing body of national organizations that make up the Education Network. In setting up the EdNet, we have reached beyond the professional, consumer, and advocacy organizations concerned

primarily with mental health to include a broad range of groups involved in general health, medicine, managed care, academia, education, business, etc., and organizations that represent minorities, children and youth, and older Americans. Our hope is that EdNet organizations will urge their State and regional affiliates to join with the Outreach Partners in projects and activities of mutual interest.

Thank you for being part of this program. ■

Elaine Baldwin
NIMH Public Liaison Officer
Director, Constituency Outreach and Education Program

The NIMH Constituency Outreach and Education Program encompasses education on *all* mental disorders, and it is a truly national program with goals that extend beyond general awareness of the symptoms and treatability of particular mental disorders.

Promoting the Surgeon General's Mental Health Messages

The first-ever Surgeon General's report on mental health, released December 1999, continues to be heralded by advocacy groups, legislators, journalists, professional organizations, and others for its extensive scientific documentation of what is known about the diagnosis and treatment of mental disorders. NIMH urges the Outreach Partners and organizations that compose the Education Network to persevere in the promotion of key messages from *Mental Health: A Report of the Surgeon General*. The 500-page report, which summarizes findings from more than 3,000 research articles and other materials, emphasizes that mental illness is a critical public health problem that must be addressed by the Nation.

"Today, a strong consensus among Americans in all walks of life holds that our society no longer can afford to view mental health as separate and unequal to

general health," U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher, M.D., said in the report. His most explicit recommendation to the American people is to "seek help if you have a mental health problem or think you have symptoms of a mental disorder."

Other key messages of the report:

- ! Over the past 25 years, a scientific revolution has been taking place, contributing to our understanding of the brain and behavior. This knowledge has led to the development of new and more effective treatments and services for people with mental illnesses.
- ! Mental disorders such as depression, schizophrenia, and obsessive-compulsive disorder are real illnesses that are as disabling and serious as cancer and heart disease in terms of premature death and lost productivity.
- ! Mental illnesses can be correctly diagnosed. There are several choices of treatments of most disorders, including medications and short-term psychotherapy.
- ! One in five Americans has a mental disorder, but many do not seek help. Americans are urged to take advantage of the research and treatment advances that have given new hope to people with mental illnesses, and to seek help if they or loved ones have symptoms of a mental illness.

! A gap exists between what we know to be the "best" treatments for mental disorders and the treatments and services that a person often has access to in the local community. As the treatment system relies increasingly on the results of research, help-seeking will more quickly result in receipt of effective treatment in all parts of the mental health service system.

National and local media coverage of the report was extensive and has continued. Numerous organizations have cited the report's vision, which

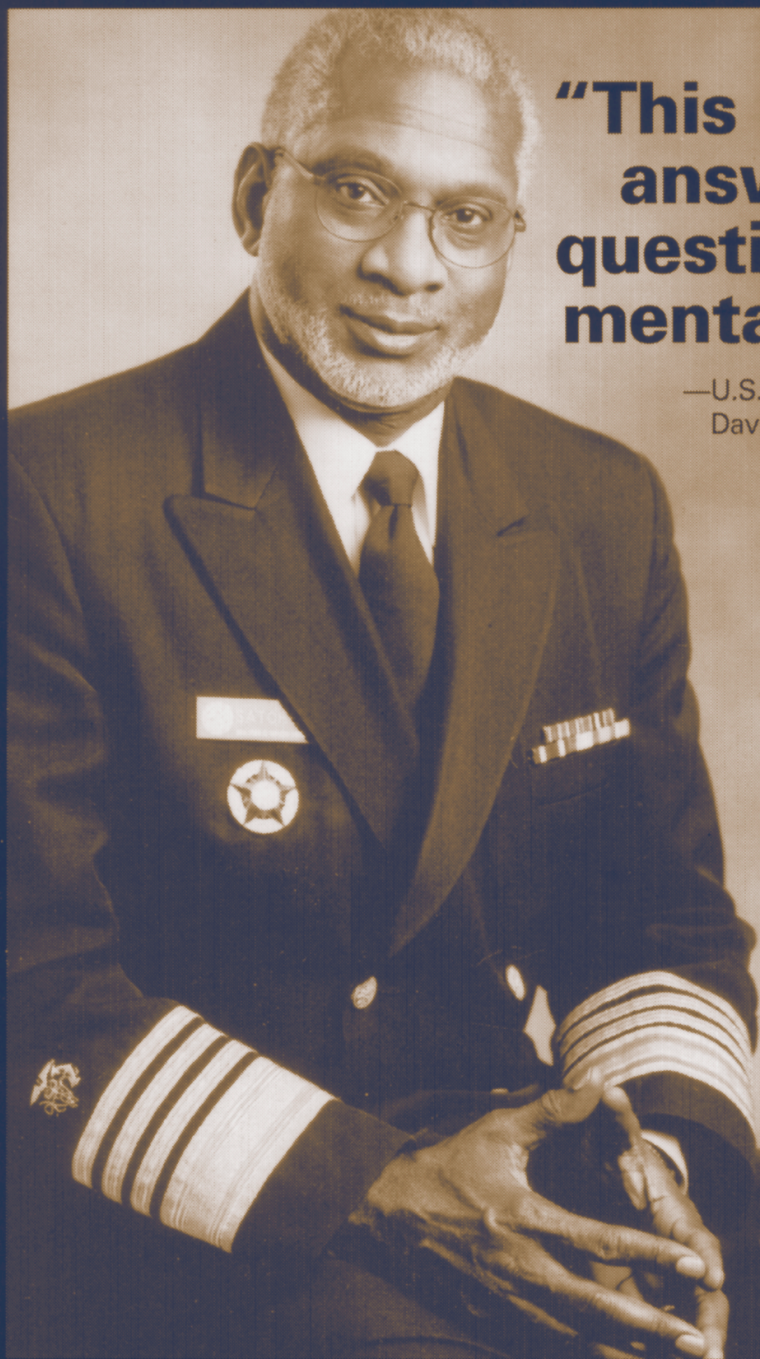
lists courses of future action that include continuing research, reducing stigma, and ensuring access to state-of-the-art treatments tailored to age, gender, race, and culture.

To help accomplish these goals and to make the report a living document, NIMH developed a number of materials, including newsletter articles, fact sheets, a national directory of

resources, a catalog of mental health publications available from Federal agencies, and camera-ready print public service announcements featuring Dr. Satcher for the general public and for health care professionals. With support from the Center for Mental Health Services, NIMH assembled these materials into outreach kits that provide groups with creative, practical ideas for using the Surgeon General's report to strengthen their own information dissemination efforts. The kits were distributed to NIMH Outreach Partners, State mental health program directors, advocacy and consumer organizations, and participants of a nationwide video-conference about the report that was broadcast from the Carter Center on May 22. The National Mental Health Association has posted many of the kit materials on its Web site (<http://www.nmha.org>); single copies of the report's Executive Summary and other materials can be ordered by calling, toll-free, 1-877-9MHEALTH (1-877-964-3258).

Outreach Partners are strongly urged to adapt and use the kit materials in their ongoing activities throughout 2000 and beyond. The complete report can be viewed from the NIMH Web site (<http://www.nimh.nih.gov>). ■

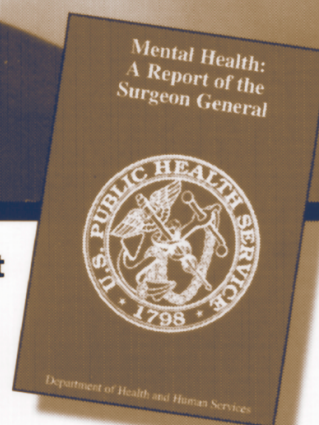
"Today, a strong consensus among Americans in all walks of life holds that our society no longer can afford to view mental health as separate and unequal to general health."
—Surgeon General David Satcher



**"This report can
answer your
questions about
mental health."**

—U.S. Surgeon General
David Satcher, M.D.

Find out more today.



**Mental disorders are real illnesses that affect
1 in 5 Americans.**

The good news is that research has provided a choice of effective treatments. Now is the time to seek help if you or a loved one have signs or symptoms of a mental disorder.

Call **1-877-9MHEALTH**, toll-free, for a free copy of the Executive Summary of the first-ever Surgeon General's report on mental health and other important information. See the full report at www.surgeongeneral.gov or order from the Government Printing Office (202) 512-1800.

NIMH encourages Outreach Partners and EdNet organizations to place this public service announcement (PSA) in their newsletters and periodicals and to promote it to local media. A PSA targeting health care professionals and shorter, text-only versions of both PSAs are also available. To obtain camera-ready slicks of these black and white PSAs, e-mail Sanjeev Rana at srana@hq.row.com.

Annual Meeting Spurs Networking

Steven E. Hyman, M.D., NIMH Director, challenged nearly 100 Outreach Partners and Education Network members at the first meeting of the new NIMH Constituency Outreach and Education Program in May to work with the Institute to “build a world in which people with mental illness get the right interventions and the right treatment.”

Clinical and basic research has led to effective treatments for mental disorders, but these advances are not being sufficiently translated into practice—leaving many people without adequate treatment, said Dr. Hyman. “We cannot have healthy children able to learn in school and we cannot have a healthy work force unless the widest number of Americans has access to appropriate interventions.”

The Institute created the Constituency Outreach and Education Program to focus the energy of advocacy groups and national associations on building a bridge between science and service.

“We have the data we need to make sure that we are going to make a difference for people with mental illnesses,” said Dr. Hyman. He noted that the Outreach Partners and Education Network members, by being informed about the latest research, will be better equipped to carry out their initiatives with health care providers, policymakers, and others at the national, State, and local levels.

In addition to Dr. Hyman’s charge to become agents for change to improve the quality of mental health treatment throughout the Nation, meeting participants also heard a series of presentations to help them bring science-based messages to their constituencies.

One panel described NIMH’s new, large-scale clinical trials being carried out at multiple sites throughout the country. These studies will enroll more than 10,000 people in the next 5 years, and Outreach Partners were encouraged to help recruit participants. Experts on mental disorders in youth provided research findings on attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and other childhood disorders and on suicide risk in teenagers. Another talk integrated basic and clinical research findings on post-traumatic stress disorder, giving a clear picture of the

latest understanding of the development, diagnosis, and treatment of this common anxiety disorder.

A major focus of the Constituency Outreach and Education Program is eliminating racial and cultural disparities in mental health care. NIMH devoted much of the second day of the meeting to providing Outreach Partners with information about how they can work to inform minority communities about current evidence-based treatment interventions. Partners shared resources, successes, and challenges with each other in breakout groups devoted to

communicating with African Americans, Hispanics and Latinos, and Native Americans.

The Outreach Partners and Education Network members left the meeting with fresh ideas for implementing communications programs. New activities are already burgeoning. After returning from the meeting, Beth Hudnall Stamm, the Outreach Partner from Idaho, e-mailed to say, “We met with the directors of the Community Health Centers here, and they were thrilled at

the mental health information available through the program. We are planning on working with the Idaho Primary Care Association using AmeriCorps volunteers to further our link with primary care.” Another Partner, Carol Carothers from Maine, wrote, “We are integrating the NIMH program into all we do here in Maine.”

Education Network member Nancy Dube, from the National Association of School Nurses, commented, “I hope these dialogues and networking can continue.” She reflected the feelings of other meeting participants, who, excited by the opportunities to work together, asked NIMH to facilitate continued networking by setting up an interactive, electronic mailing list for sharing ideas and developing collaborations. In addition, NIMH will convene the Outreach Partners and EdNet members biennially.

The next annual meeting of the Constituency Outreach and Education Program is slated for April 2001 and will assemble the current Outreach Partners as well as those selected from the current solicitation. More information on the program is located at <http://www.outreach.nimh.nih.gov>. ■

“We have the data we need to make sure that we are going to make a difference for people with mental illnesses.”

—Steven E. Hyman,
NIMH Director

NIMH Launches Large-Scale Clinical Trials

Eligible Participants Needed

The Institute has launched four of the largest clinical trials in its history—one study on the treatment of bipolar disorder, another on the newer antipsychotics for people with schizophrenia or those with Alzheimer's disease who exhibit psychotic and disruptive behaviors, and two studies on depression, one of which targets teenagers.

The bipolar study, STEP-BD, formally called Systematic Treatment Enhancement Program for Bipolar Disorder, finished selection of 20 sites and began recruiting patients in May. The clinical trial focusing on young people, TADS (Treatment for Adolescents with Depression Study), has 10 centers that have also begun enrolling participants. The other studies are still in the site selection process.

"These studies will evaluate the effectiveness of pharmacological and psychological interventions in thousands of people across the United States," said Grayson Norquist, M.D., M.S.P.H., Director, NIMH Division of Services and Interventions Research, which is funding the trials. "The purpose of these studies is to look at several treatment approaches and determine what works best for people with these disorders. Ultimately, these studies will help optimize the treatment practices of individual practitioners, including both mental health specialists and primary care physicians."

These studies are designed to look at how established treatments perform for patients who live in

the community and are treated there, who come from diverse backgrounds, and who may have co-occurring illnesses or other complications. In contrast to traditional clinical studies—in which new treatments are studied to see if they work and are safe in specific groups of people under ideal conditions—these new studies have very few reasons for exclusions and are open to a wide variety of people with a given illness. The new NIMH studies will also attempt to assess treatment adherence issues, provide information on the cost effectiveness of treatment, and determine whether treatment helps people return to work or school.

Participant recruitment can be the most difficult

aspect of carrying out a clinical trial. To determine what motivates people to join a clinical trial and what barriers exist to participation, NIMH conducted focus groups with individuals eligible to participate in the studies as well as family members, and also recently convened a

meeting of representatives of mental health and patient advocacy organizations. Using this information as a basis, NIMH plans to develop recruitment guidelines and materials that Outreach Partners and other organizations can use to encourage people in their States to join these important studies.

Watch the Outreach Partners Web site (<http://www.outreach.nimh.nih.gov>) for updates on the studies and the availability of recruitment materials. ■

"Ultimately, these studies will help optimize the treatment practices of individual practitioners, including both mental health specialists and primary care physicians."

—Grayson Norquist, NIMH

The NIMH Studies

CATIE (Clinical Antipsychotic Trials of Intervention Effectiveness)
<http://www.catie.unc.edu>

STAR *D (Sequenced Treatment Alternatives to Relieve Depression)
<http://www.edc.gsph.pitt.edu/stard>

STEP-BD (Systemic Treatment Enhancement Program for Bipolar Disorder)
<http://www.edc.gsph.pitt.edu/stepbd>

TADS (Treatment for Adolescents with Depression Study)
<https://trialweb.dcri.duke.edu/tads/index.html>

NIMH Welcomes First 18 Outreach Partners

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|--|--|---|
| ! Arizona Mental Health Association of Arizona (Scottsdale) | ! Kentucky Mental Health Association of Northern Kentucky (Covington) | ! New York Mental Health Association of New York City, Inc. |
| ! District of Columbia Mental Health Association of the District of Columbia | ! Louisiana Mental Health Association in Louisiana (Baton Rouge) | ! North Carolina North Carolina Depressive & Manic Depressive Association (Raleigh) |
| ! Florida Mental Health Association of Broward County (Fort Lauderdale) | ! Maine NAMI Maine (Augusta) | ! Ohio NAMI Ohio (Howard) |
| ! Georgia National Mental Health Association of Georgia (Atlanta) | ! Michigan Mental Health Association in Michigan (Lansing) | ! Pennsylvania NAMI Pennsylvania (Harrisburg) |
| ! Idaho Institute of Rural Health Studies, Idaho State University (Pocatello) | ! Minnesota Mental Health Association of Minnesota (Minneapolis) | ! Rhode Island Mental Health Association of Rhode Island (Pawtucket) |
| ! Indiana Mental Health Association in Indiana, Inc. (Indianapolis) | ! Mississippi Mental Health Association in South Mississippi (Gulfport) | ! Washington NAMI Washington (Ferndale) |



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